

**THE OXFORD MOVEMENT  
AND  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**Dr DAVID NOCKLES**

Paper read to the Anglo-Catholic History Society  
at the Church of St Clement Danes, Strand, London on  
November 19 2012

## THE OXFORD MOVEMENT & THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Dr Peter Nockles is a librarian in the John Rylands Library and a Research Fellow in Religions & Theology at the University of Manchester. He is the author of *The Oxford Movement in Context* (Cambridge University Press, 1994) and has published numerous papers on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century British religious history. He has lectured widely in Britain, Europe and the United States.

His current work includes a recently published Cambridge University Press volume of scholarly essays, *The Oxford Movement, Europe and the Wider World, 1833-1930* and is one of the three editors of a forthcoming Oxford University Press *Handbook of the Oxford Movement*.

In addition to his literary output, he is active in many learned Societies including the Catholic Record Society, the Catholic Writer's Guild, the Ecclesiastical History Society and Church of England Record Society. He is currently contributing to a new history of Worcester College, Oxford, to a festschrift volume for the Rev. Henry Rack, to a volume of essays on 'Receptions of Newman' in memory of the late Frank Turner, and to a major study of Global Anglicanism.

The prolonged but unsuccessful campaign for a resident Anglican bishop in the North American Colonies has been shown to have been a contributory cause of the American Revolution. For dominant Whig, nonconformist, and latitudinarian opinion, moves to introduce a native episcopacy, though supported by native high churchmen such as Samuel Johnson (1696-1774), first president of King's College, New York, was presented as part of a plot to subvert American liberties and impose the kind of 'Laudian' despotism and sacerdotal aggression which had induced their Puritan forebears to flee to North America in the 1620s and 1630s. The Church of England in America and in particular, a high church understanding of the Church, was tarnished by associations with Toryism and eventually Loyalism. Anglican Loyalists such as Jonathan Boucher (1738-1804), Myles Cooper (c. 1737-85) and (for a time) Thomas Bradbury Chandler (1726-90), retreated to the Mother Country and inveighed against rebellion. Thus the Church lost many of her best clergy and laity, for a time was without government or discipline and was weakened by internal division. Although Samuel Seabury (1729-96), the first bishop in the United States, was a high churchman and owed his consecration to Scottish Episcopalian Nonjurors, the model of American episcopacy ultimately adopted was a latitudinarian one with the principle of popular election introduced. Moreover, much mythology surrounds the first American Prayer Book of 1789. Far from being moulded entirely by the apparently high church Seabury, recent scholarship suggests that it was the compromise product of very mixed and contending influences within the Episcopal Church and bore the mark of the latitudinarian William White as well as more conservative voices.

leadership of John Henry Hobart (Bishop of New York, 1811-30). There was an emphasis on the divine constitution and order of and in the church and on the primitive church as the model for ecclesiology and apostolic order. As Bishop Hobart explained to his Presbyterian critics who had accused him of urging ‘extravagant and arrogant pretensions’ on behalf of his communion, this was part of a concerted need to re-educate American Episcopalians in the principles of their own church; principles which Hobart himself, as he candidly admitted, had violated ‘through the want of correct information’. A renewed sense of affinity with the mother Church of England developed: Hobart’s writings owed a debt to those of his English high church contemporary Archdeacon Daubeny (1745-1827), while both Bishop Hobart and his ‘low church’ rival, Philander Chase, Bishop of Ohio (from 1819) made fund raising visits to England in 1823-24. These visits helped raise the English as well as Scottish profile of the American Church. Bishop Hobart was courted by English high churchmen, notably those of the so-called ‘Hackney Phalanx’ such as Joshua Watson (1771-1855) and Henry Handley Norris (1771-1850). On the other hand, Bishop Chase, who gave flattering accounts of attending divine worship in Manchester’s Collegiate Church and Oriel College, Oxford (where he stayed as the guest of the Provost, Edward Copleston), during this visit, was lionized primarily by Anglican Evangelicals, and attracted criticism from English high churchmen, a pattern that was replicated on Bishop Chase’s later visit to England in 1835 when he failed to impress the Oxford Tractarians. There were some notable exceptions such as Alexander Weiss Griswold, Bishop of the Eastern Diocese from 1811, but the American Church never had a strong Evangelical component. It was later maintained, partly because of the opposition of the Episcopal Church to ‘the Puritanism of revolutionary times’, that it always had ‘an anti-evangelical stamp and tendency’.

This American high church revival spread to the extent that it has been claimed that in the early-1830s, partly in consequence

of its separation from the state and entanglements of establishment, and of its need to define itself against the dominance of protestant sects, the American Church was more Catholic in feeling and in teaching than the Church of England, that it ‘needed the Oxford Movement less than did the Church of England’. It was precisely the independence of the American Church and its freedom from State control which in the mid-1820s impressed the influential Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, the future Archbishop of Dublin, Richard Whately (1787-1863) and mentor of John Henry Newman. The anti-Erastian anonymous *Letters of an Episcopalian* (1826), almost universally attributed to Whately, appear to have owed something to the successful example of the disestablished American Episcopalian Church: Whately even referred to his Episcopalian pamphlet as ‘the address to the American episcopalians’. By the mid-1830s, the expansion of episcopacy in North America was attracting admiring notice from all parties in the Church of England.

Circumstances had already forced American churchmen to address the questions – the divine origin of the Church, apostolical succession, baptismal regeneration, the Real Presence and Eucharistic Sacrifice, the value of Tradition – which the *Tracts for the Times* propounded. In short, the view was widely held that the tenets first presented in the Tracts ‘contained nothing more than American high churchmen had taught’. Bishop Hobart was hailed not only as ‘the father of American High Churchmanship’ but as in many ways ‘the foster father of the Oxford Movement’; and inspirer of an American high church revival predating the Oxford Movement. Bishop Hobart, who proudly claimed the title of ‘high churchman’, had a considerable influence upon the Oxford Tractarians, partly through the publication in Oxford of McVicar’s biography and the English high churchman W.F. Hook’s sympathetic history of the American church. In No. 81 of the *Tracts for the Times*, Pusey made favourable mention of the American liturgy, Moreover, English editions of a few American Episcopalian

publications in the 1830s were readily welcomed by English high churchmen as ‘the offerings of the daughter to the mother’ and proof of ‘her not unworthy parentage’. On the other hand, the ecclesiastical ties between the Mother and daughter church remained fragile. During his stay in England in 1823–4, Bishop Hobart was not even allowed to preach or assist in Anglican services, since the Act which had authorised the consecration of bishops for America prohibited their being beneficed or even officiating in the mother country.

Tractarian teaching certainly found a fertile soil in the United States, though the first edition of the *Tracts for the Times* was only published in New York in 1840. A recent historian of the nineteenth-century Episcopal Church has suggested from his analysis of the evidence that the *Tracts for the Times* and other Tractarian publications were more talked about than read. Yet for all this and despite the limited circulation of the Tracts themselves, even some American critics of the Movement conceded that most churchmen in the United States initially welcomed the teaching contained in them. The General Theological Seminary in New York had become a hot-bed of Tractarianism by the early-1840s, while the Episcopal Church had several leading supporters of the Movement such as Dr Samuel Seabury (1801–72), editor of *The Churchman*, George Washington Doane (1799–1859), Bishop of New Jersey, William Rollinson Whittingham, Bishop of Maryland, Henry Ustick Onderdonk (1789–1858), Bishop of Pennsylvania, and Edgar P. Wadham. Bishop Doane, editor of the first American edition of Keble’s *The Christian Year*, became a close *confidant* of Keble and Pusey. He made an extended tour of England in 1841 and gave moral support to the Tractarian cause, preaching for W.F. Hook, Vicar of Leeds at the consecration of his new parish Church of St Saviour’s on 2 September 1841 at what Doane called a ‘Catholic occasion’. By 1846 at least one Episcopal clergyman in New York was receiving ‘confessions, after a form furnished by Dr Pusey’.

The Episcopal Church even had its Hurrell Froude parallel in the figure of the youthful Arthur Carey (1822–44), an assistant minister to Samuel Seabury at the Church of the Annunciation in New York City and one-time seminary student at the General Theological Seminary whose examination and ordination in St Stephen’s Church, New York, in July 1843 provoked an outcry among more Protestant elements within the Episcopal Church on account of his ‘Romanising’ views. It was claimed that Carey’s ordination showed that the ‘aim and intention of the Puseyites in America’ was ‘the same as that of the Puseyites in England – TO UNPROTETESTANTISE THE CHURCH’.

The Carey ordination even attracted critical notice among anti-Tractarians in the Church of England. Edward Copleston, Bishop of Llandaff and formerly Provost of Oriel, was only too aware of the challenge posed by Tractarianism. He privately criticized the ordination and its justification by an American bishop in a letter to his old pupil, Richard Whately, Archbishop of Dublin. Commenting on a published statement of defence of the ordination, Copleston told Whately that it seemed to him, ‘decisive of the point that the American Episcopal Church is no longer Protestant, but Popish’.

Carey corresponded with Newman whose interest in the American church had been evident in an article which he published in the *British Critic* in October 1839. In November 1843, Carey writing from New York, urged Newman to remember him and ‘a little band who are very lonely and who think that if you did but know of our existence, you would not forget us’ He confided to Newman that he and his young friends from the General Theological Seminary were,

~~~~~

‘exposed to the temptation of shrinking from those points, which will make us suspected by the High Church party (*the dominant one*) in order to justify them in defending us’.

This will have a struck a chord with Newman and his Littlemore circle who had for some time been in a similar position in relation to high church supporters of the Movement in the Church of England such as William Palmer of Worcester College and Edward Churton. Carey concluded his letter by a forthright avowal of the closeness which he and his like-minded friends in New York felt to Newman and his Littlemore community: ‘The call on your disciples to pray for their teacher has thrilled through our hearts, and made us feel more near to you, than we are to our friends in this country’. Shortly after sending this letter, Carey, like Froude with whom he was widely considered to share many religious characteristics, died tragically young (in Carey’s case on board a ship off Havana on 4 April 1844 at the age of twenty-one). Newman was even approached by Tractarian supporters, such as Carey’s seminary tutor, Benjamin McMaster, in the General Theological Seminary in New York, to write a memoir of Carey and edit his writings. Carey had been reputed to spend at least three hours a day in devotional exercises, and engaged in ascetical practices reminiscent of Newman’s late friend Hurrell Froude. The intention was to produce an American equivalent of Froude’s *Remains* (1838-39). Newman, who was much affected by Carey’s premature death and who always took the greatest interest in the cause of ‘Apostolical’ principles in North America, only reluctantly declined the invitation. Newman’s reasons reveal a deep respect for the independence and self-identity of the high church revival in the United States. As he explained to Dalgairns:

*it is plain that though Mr Carey was born on this side of the Atlantic, he is the property of America, and we must not take what is not ours. It would be a great disrespect to our American Fathers and brethren, and unjust’.*

In explaining almost to himself why he was ‘the last person’ who should write Carey’s memoir and epitaph, in a remarkable passage in the same letter, Newman appeared almost to envy

Carey’s fate and to compare it favourably with his own embattled situation:

*‘He is taken away to the regret of all men, high in the favour, affection, and confidence of his church, whatever opponents he might have had besides. With me it is quite the reverse. There may be many individuals who think kindly of me, but my own church has no confidence in me, and has with great unanimity through its various organs reprobated what I have published, when it has not kept silence’.*

McMaster and his friends, however, could only see affinities and not differences between how Newman and they were regarded in their respective churches. The feeling of desolation experienced by Newman and his followers on the premature death of Froude was replicated across the Atlantic in the sense of isolation and anguish felt by McMaster and his friends following Carey’s premature death. McMaster gave expression to the sense of loss which the American church had been dealt by Carey’s demise in a letter to his friend Edgar Wadham:

*‘What remains for us, dear Wadham, but to drag out the rest of our life, remembering and acting on what we once gladly learned from him? As to doing anything in our miserable church, I am almost out of hope’.*

It was a time to look ever more closely for support from the inner Tractarian coterie in Oxford itself. Newman’s friend and principal disciple in the Littlemore community, John Dobree Dalgairns (1808-76) of Pembroke College, Oxford, acting as his mentor’s respondent, reassured McMaster who had already visited Newman in Oriel and in Littlemore,

*‘You seem in some places of your letter to doubt whether I feel an interest in the Anglo-American church. You may however be quite at rest on the subject, for we all feel the greatest interest in*

*persons who have in a great measure the same trials and temptations'.*

Dalgairns was explicit in drawing out an analogy between Carey's death and that of Hurrell Froude, with the suggestion that the memory of the premature deaths of both these two lost prophets would serve to guide and alter the course of the religious movement on both sides of the Atlantic. Thus, Dalgairns reminded McMaster:

*'Perhaps it may be of some comfort to you to recollect that in the outset of the movement in England Mr Newman and Mr Keble lost their most intimate friend Froude, and that his memory has had a great, perhaps the greatest effect on the course of the movement'.*

In 1836 Newman informed Hook that he had,

*'for some time thought that a greater service could not be done to the Church, than for two or three men who agree with us to go over to New York and make it their headquarters for several years'*.

Newman had even wanted his one-time Oriel pupil and disciple Frederic Rogers (later Lord Blackford) to act as, what Rogers facetiously called, a kind of 'Apostolical bagman' who would facilitate lines of communication between Oxford and the Episcopal Church in the United States. The correspondence between Dalgairns and McMaster exemplified this close communication, with Dalgairns keeping McMaster and his group of like-minded friends and students at the General Theological Seminary closely informed of events and theological developments and realignments at Oxford. Thus Dalgairns told McMaster about the condemnation of Pusey by the Six Doctors for his controversial sermon on the eucharist in the University church of St Mary's in 1843, on the first moves to condemn W.G. Ward's *Ideal of a Christian Church* in 1844

and about the heterogeneous elements ('I do not know whether America can furnish specimens of each class') that were beginning to direct official opposition to Tractarianism within the University of Oxford. A common bond of sympathy united both groups on either side of the Atlantic in times of growing adversity for the fortunes of the Movement by the mid-1840s. The bond was particularly close between apparent 'Romanisers' such as Dalgairns and McMaster as they both pondered the ultimate step of joining the Roman Catholic Church. Dalgairns's comment in a letter of August 1844 to his American friend expressed this sense of common destiny:

*'I am so much in the same situation as yourself that I can well appreciate the pain suffered by a person on his way to Rome, as you are'.*

It was appropriate that McMaster, who visited and stayed at Littlemore from 1 September until 2 September 1845, should be one of the first to receive from Dalgairns in October 1845 the news 'that all those whom you saw at Littlemore have now the ineffable joy of being Catholics'. There were others in the Protestant Episcopal Church deemed to be 'shaky' in their allegiance by 1845. On 28 May 1845, Newman writing from Littlemore, noted:

*'A Mr Forbes of New York, a very pleasing man...was here the other day, and appeared very shaky indeed, but Pusey has since steadied him'.*

These individuals clearly represented an advanced wing among American churchmen and were in tune with the most advanced Tractarians in England. According to McMaster, even Dr Seabury, editor of *The Churchman*, was 'sick and tired' of traditional high churchmen in the Episcopal Church and 'goes about as far as I do'. Moreover, Newman's 'in-tray', correspondence at Littlemore included letters from other American Episcopilians imbued with the principles of the

*persons who have in a great measure the same trials and temptations'.*

Dalgairns was explicit in drawing out an analogy between Carey's death and that of Hurrell Froude, with the suggestion that the memory of the premature deaths of both these two lost prophets would serve to guide and alter the course of the religious movement on both sides of the Atlantic. Thus, Dalgairns reminded McMaster:

*'Perhaps it may be of some comfort to you to recollect that in the outset of the movement in England Mr Newman and Mr Keble lost their most intimate friend Froude, and that his memory has had a great, perhaps the greatest effect on the course of the movement'.*

In 1836 Newman informed Hook that he had,

*'for some time thought that a greater service could not be done to the Church, than for two or three men who agree with us to go over to New York and make it their headquarters for several years'.*

Newman had even wanted his one-time Oriel pupil and disciple Frederic Rogers (later Lord Blackford) to act as, what Rogers facetiously called, a kind of 'Apostolical bagman' who would facilitate lines of communication between Oxford and the Episcopal Church in the United States. The correspondence between Dalgairns and McMaster exemplified this close communication, with Dalgairns keeping McMaster and his group of like-minded friends and students at the General Theological Seminary closely informed of events and theological developments and realignments at Oxford. Thus Dalgairns told McMaster about the condemnation of Pusey by the Six Doctors for his controversial sermon on the eucharist in the University church of St Mary's in 1843, on the first moves to condemn W.G. Ward's *Ideal of a Christian Church* in 1844

and about the heterogeneous elements ('I do not know whether America can furnish specimens of each class') that were beginning to direct official opposition to Tractarianism within the University of Oxford. A common bond of sympathy united both groups on either side of the Atlantic in times of growing adversity for the fortunes of the Movement by the mid-1840s. The bond was particularly close between apparent 'Romanisers' such as Dalgairns and McMaster as they both pondered the ultimate step of joining the Roman Catholic Church. Dalgairns's comment in a letter of August 1844 to his American friend expressed this sense of common destiny:

*'I am so much in the same situation as yourself that I can well appreciate the pain suffered by a person on his way to Rome, as you are'.*

It was appropriate that McMaster, who visited and stayed at Littlemore from 1 September until 2 September 1845, should be one of the first to receive from Dalgairns in October 1845 the news 'that all those whom you saw at Littlemore have now the ineffable joy of being Catholics'. There were others in the Protestant Episcopal Church deemed to be 'shaky' in their allegiance by 1845. On 28 May 1845, Newman writing from Littlemore, noted:

*'A Mr Forbes of New York, a very pleasing man... was here the other day, and appeared very shaky indeed, but Pusey has since steadied him'.*

These individuals clearly represented an advanced wing among American churchmen and were in tune with the most advanced Tractarians in England. According to McMaster, even Dr Seabury, editor of *The Churchman*, was 'sick and tired' of traditional high churchmen in the Episcopal Church and 'goes about as far as I do'. Moreover, Newman's 'in-tray', correspondence at Littlemore included letters from other American Episcopalian imbued with the principles of the

Oxford Movement but which dealt primarily with practical matters of school education and discipline rather than the immediate issues of theological controversy.

It was not only Newman's 'Romanising' circle that was in close contact with American Episcopalians in the 1840s. The ties between more moderate Tractarians of the so-called 'Bisley school' such as Isaac Williams and Thomas Keble and high churchmen in the United States were no less significant. For example, a Dr Henry Potter of Albany, New York, was in regular correspondence with Isaac Williams and visited and met with him and other old-fashioned Anglican high churchmen such as Henry Handley Norris (1779-1850) and Thomas Bowdler, as well as Tractarians such as Pusey in Christ Church, Oxford, and William Dodsworth (whom he heard preach) in London, during a visit to England in September 1845. Potter waxed lyrical about his stay at Bisley as the guest of the Vicar, John Keble's brother, Thomas.

Nonetheless, for all its freedom from the limitations imposed by a religious establishment, and assertions that the Oxford Movement consequently found 'fewer obstacles in that republic than in this kingdom', other factors ultimately militated against or restrained the progress of the Oxford Movement in the United States and made English Tractarians somewhat ambivalent about their American Episcopal brethren. As once Newman observed: 'they have a great gift and do not know how to use it'. John Keble and his brother Thomas shared a widespread perception that the American Church was a somewhat flawed model to follow. Thomas Keble noted that English latitudinarians could refer to the American Church as setting 'a good example in omitting the Athanasian Creed', that 'Socinianism & Arianism have flourished of late years more than in any Christian country' and that the theological opinions of Archbishop Whately (by then the great *bête noir* of the Tractarians) were 'astonishingly admired by the clergy (or some of them) in America'. W.F. Hook, one of the first English high

churchmen to take up their cause by material and spiritual assistance, by the mid-1830s while still 'anxious to assist the Brethren in America', was lamenting to Newman that,

*'though they have a Catholic church, there prevails among its members very little genuine Church principle. I have watched their progress for some years, and have seen with sorrow that there has always been an inclination even among their best men to yield to the prevailing opinions of the age'.*

Hook highlighted the example of the American Church's introduction of a rubric on Regeneration which appeared to compromise the Catholic doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration. For his part, Newman related to Hook that he had heard from Pusey that there was a great fear of the American Church even splitting into two over the issue of Baptismal Regeneration, 'the Western taking the ultra protestant view, the New York connexion the Catholic'. Newman was unimpressed by Philander Chase, now Bishop of Illinois, when he called upon him in Oriel in 1835, noting disapprovingly that Chase had appeared ignorant of Hook's endeavours on behalf of his Church. Hook concluded his American reflections to Newman with a telling comment:

*'I fear that our American Fathers and Brothers are too apt to consider that, if they maintain the one doctrine of Episcopacy, sadly curtailed as the jurisdiction of Bishops is, nothing more is required'.*

Anti-Erastianism in itself was ultimately not enough. English high church advocates of establishment were not as a consequence deficient in their sacramental theology or ecclesiology in comparison with American high churchmen in the Hobartian tradition who disavowed the church-state connection on principle. In fact, in the United States, argued English high churchmen, there were other (perhaps less overt) restrictions on the independence of the church such as the

constraints of overweening popular lay and ‘national’ influence and the limitations of a voluntary system and lack of endowments which had forced American churchmen to seek subscriptions in England to satisfy the most basic needs of theological education and learning, and very much to depend on the supply of books of divinity from W.F. Hook and other English high church and tractarian benefactors. English high churchmen in the 1830s still regarded a learned clergy in America as a noble aspiration to be supported but not, with notable exceptions, yet a reality there. In spite of his own efforts on their behalf, according to Hook in 1835, ‘the Divinity of most of our brethren and many of our Fathers in that part of the world is somewhat crude.’ In short, there were features in the American church polity and constitutional arrangements (such as its elective legislative framework) and in its liturgical and ecclesiological arrangements which English Tractarians, on closer inspection, would find wanting. The latter were no more impressed than pre-Tractarian high churchmen had been, by the fact that American episcopacy was republican and popular and defended as such even by those (in the Hobartian tradition), who like the Tractarians, insisted on it as a divine institution.

Moreover, in terms of liturgical arrangements and worship the American church left much to be desired. Newman’s review article on Henry Caswall’s history of the American Church in the Tractarian ‘in-house’ journal *The British Critic* in 1839 hinted at this. Newman mixed praise for some features, such as the writings of Bishops Samuel Seabury and John Henry Hobart, with some pointed criticism tinged with sarcasm such as the following:

*Let the visible be a type of the invisible. You have dispensed with the clerk, you are spared the royal arms; still who would ever recognise in a large double cube, with bare nails, wide windows, high pulpit, capacious reading desk, galleries projecting, and altar obscured, an outward emblem of the heavenly Jerusalem, the fount of grace, the resort of angels?*

The slightest liturgical innovations could be condemned by authority. For example, Henry Potter of Albany informed Isaac Williams in late 1845, that the ‘Bishop of Massachusetts has just denounced one of his clergy for having a Holy Table like an altar’.

While American Episcopalian sympathisers with the Oxford Movement remained confident at least until the mid-1840s that ‘Catholic Truth is insensibly winning its way’ and that many Dissenters were joining the Episcopal Church, the fear was expressed that ‘we find it hard to assimilate all the new material’, and that ‘many of our Bishops are Ultra Protestant’. Vocal resistance to Tractarianism emanated from leading figures in the Episcopal Church such as the Evangelical Charles Petit McIlvaine (1799-1873), Bishop of Ohio (from 1832), Bishop William Meade, and a more muted and nuanced refutation from John Henry Hopkins (1792-1868), first Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Vermont, who has been described as an old-fashioned American high churchman of the ‘Connecticut-Hobartian school’ who fell out with Newman during a visit to England in 1839. As has been recently argued, Hopkins was critical of Tractarian ‘novelty’ from a high church standpoint, fearing that the Tractarian emphasis on the indefectibility of the church actually undermined the ground of certainty which the high church appeal to primitive record had seemed to provide for Bishop Hobart and his school in the American context.

Prior to the impact of the Oxford Movement, party division lines between high church and Evangelical elements within the Protestant Episcopal Church were somewhat indistinct or muted, though perceptions of a West-East division on church lines had, as we have seen, been expressed by English Tractarians as early as the mid-1830s. However, the reaction to Tractarianism drew the always somewhat fragile Evangelical component within the Episcopal Church increasingly apart from their high church brethren, ultimately forcing some of them to withdraw from her communion to found a new church. Episcopalian Evangelicals

questioned whether Episcopalian high church supporters of the Tractarians had really read the contents of the *Tracts for the Times* or understood their tendency. It has also been argued that initial favourable responses to Tractarianism from high church American Episcopalian largely emanated from an appreciation of the Tractarian emphasis on ‘the beauty of holiness, on liturgy and worship, and that, as the example of Bishop Hopkins showed, they became internally divided when the theological implications of the Tractarian exaltation of catholicity and unity as well as antiquity became apparent. In the case of Hopkins, English Tractarians would have been puzzled by the combination of a robust defence of ‘the great doctrines of the Reformation’ with support for Ritualism. These emerging divisions and contradictions within the Episcopal Church over the reaction to Tractarianism were exploited by American Presbyterians so as to discredit and undermine the Church as a whole.

High church Episcopilians in the United States were also forced on to the defensive and the party was weakened by the suspension of Henry Onderdonk, Bishop of Pennsylvania in 1845 for alleged moral misdemeanours. As in the Church of England, the dominant high church position within the Episcopal Church as expressed by Bishop Whittingham and even Bishop Doane who had personal battles with Rome and who personally strove hard to hold Newman within the Church of England, became one of reaction against the ‘excesses’ of the Movement and a reassertion of anti-Romanism on the basis of classical Anglicanism. This trend was encouraged by Newman’s conversion to Rome and his abandonment of his earlier *Via Media* position, with which high church Episcopilians

identified, in favour of a theory of the development of religious doctrine. Stunned by Newman’s defection, Henry Potter took comfort from claiming that Newman,

‘cannot slide from his former position into his present one. His former principles do not lead to his new ones. He is obliged to retract the former’.

It was a trend also exacerbated by the lively interest which American Roman Catholic bishops such as Francis Patrick Kenrick and many clergy took in the progress of the Oxford Movement on both sides of the Atlantic as an opportunity for conversions to Rome, an interest encouraged by Nicholas Wiseman who kept Catholic bishops in the United States informed of Oxford news. It was an interest, especially when coupled with vigorous American Catholic rebuttals of Tractarian claims of Anglican apostolical continuity and succession as espoused in the early numbers of the *Tracts for the Times*, which roused suspicion and jealousy even among elements in the Protestant Episcopal Church most favourable to the Movement. It was an interest which also had longer implications for Anglo-Roman relations. Although there would be notable conversions to Rome from among the higher Episcopal clergy such as (in 1851) Levi Silliman Ives (1797-1867), Bishop of North Carolina, and (in 1855) Bishop Doane’s own eldest son whom the Bishop had himself ordained, it had become clear by 1846 that the number of converts to Rome from the Episcopal Church in the United States was proportionally lower than those from the Church of England. Moreover, some American converts to Rome in the period were not from the Protestant Episcopal Church but from other very different religious traditions; the most notable example being that of one of the convert Newman’s sternest critics, Orestes Brownson, a fellow convert to Rome but one who passed through from Unitarianism and Transcendentalism.

The Anglo-Catholic movement within the Episcopal Church continued to flourish and in the Mid-West took an evangelistic and missionary form with the founding of Nashotah House in Wisconsin in the early-1840s, and standards of worship and liturgical observance would improve. However, as in the Church

of England, the high church party was forced on to the defensive and even Evangelicals in the Episcopal Church felt challenged by Presbyterian and non-episcopal Evangelicals. Native and long-standing fears of episcopal despotism and ‘priestcraft’, dating back to the Colonial era, resurfaced. Significantly, the number of high church clerics raised to the American episcopate declined after the 1840s.

It can be concluded, that the progress of the Oxford Movement in North America demonstrated the enduring residual ties between the Mother Country and her former colony in religious and theological terms but also evidence of that cultural divergence which has been characterised as a feature of Anglo-America in the period. The ‘wider world’ of our volume title in this case was English-speaking, ‘Anglo-Saxon, and culturally linked even if geographically widely separated. Nonetheless, the lack of a formal communion between the Church of England and Episcopal Church was an obstacle which high churchmen on both sides of the Atlantic had to overcome. Moreover, the impact of the Oxford Movement proved to be a mixed blessing in theological terms for the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States and can be cited as one of several components in a process of cultural divergence in Anglo-America that has been shown to characterise the period. Just as British and American Methodisms grew apart, so to an extent did British and American forms of high church Anglicanism. Although American Episcopalians made a virtue of the voluntary principle, the lack of state financing for the Episcopal Church was a source of weakness and rendered Episcopalians dependent on the Mother Church and in turn exacerbated church party rivalry. Without the Oxford Movement, the progress of American high churchmanship might have been smoother and have remained better adapted to the realities of American politics and culture than it proved to be, but it would not and could not then have been the same phenomenon.